

Smallholder pig value chains development in Uganda

Catalysing the emerging smallholder pig value chains to increase rural incomes and assets



The Smallholder Pig Value Chains Development (SPVCD) in Uganda project seeks to transform subsistence-level pig-keeping into a viable, profitable business model increasing incomes, and thereby reducing poverty and enhancing food security, while preserving community natural resource systems.

Over the past three decades pig production has become increasingly important in Uganda. This is indicated by the change in pig population from 0.19 to 3.2 million. In 2011, Uganda had the highest per capita consumption of pork meat in Sub-Saharan Africa (3.4 kg/person/year). In Uganda there are more than 1.1 million families raising pigs, mostly as a backyard activity in smallholder households in peri-urban and rural areas.



Pig raising is a production activity for many smallholder families in Kamuli (Uganda) – photo credit ILRI/Emily Ouma

Pigs play an important role in the livelihoods of poor families, because they help to generate income to cover emergency needs and pay school fees, are means to use crop residues and kitchen left overs, and they generate manure used to fertilize high value crops. Frequently, women and children are responsible for the management of pigs, whereas men do the marketing.

Most pigs in Uganda, as in many other Sub-Saharan African countries, are produced by a large informal subsector, with limited access to technology, information and services. This applies to all actors of the value chain including farmers, traders, butchers, and retailers.

Several problems have been identified along the pig value chain in Uganda. Regarding feeding, there is a lack of year-round stability of feed supply, and feed quality control measures are absent. In animal health, the frequent breakouts of African Swine Fever and Foot and Mouth Disease both result in significant animal losses. Parasitic diseases also affect the economy of pig farming. Inbreeding affects the productive and reproductive performance of pigs. Poor housing infrastructure affects animal welfare and hygiene, does not allow the efficient collection and use of manure, and could contribute to pollute water sources. Moreover, when animals are managed freely (scavenging), it may result in conflicts with neighbors producing crops.

The lack of sanitary control in slaughtering, processing and commercialization of pork meat, results in food safety risks. Poor market infrastructure and institutional arrangements (underdeveloped marketing system) result in a large number of middlemen, and high price difference between rural and urban markets. All these translate into small producer margins.



A typical pork retailing point at village level in Gulu – photo credit ILRI/Danilo Pezo

The limited opportunities for knowledge sharing between producers, public officials, development agents, and scientists, result in limited uptake of proven technologies.

However, these problems are not unique to Uganda, and can be found in many other developing countries where informal pig production and marketing systems are present.

Project Goal

To improve livelihoods, incomes and assets of smallholder pig producers, particularly women, in a sustainable manner, through increased productivity, reduced risk, and improved market access in pig value chains.

Objectives

- To identify market opportunities for pork in Uganda, and the multiple factors preventing smallholder pig producers from exploiting those opportunities, with focus on constraints caused by animal disease threat, feed resources, and performance of markets and services.
- To develop and pilot test a set of integrated packages for smallholder pig production and market access for specific production systems, resource profiles and market settings in Uganda.
- To document, communicate and promote appropriate evidence-based models for sustainable, pro-poor pig value chains.

Approach

The project will adopt a Value Chain Approach, in which the main goal is to achieve sustainable competitiveness through focusing resources on efficiently producing pigs that offer superior consumer-recognized value. A closely-aligned value chain often contains vertically and horizontally linked players such as improved feeds, genetics and veterinary service providers, farmers, traders, butchers, processors, distributors, and retailers. To achieve relevant impacts in the value chain, it is important to understand the role of each actor, and to identify entry points for generating significant changes in the value chain.

Many of the constraints and opportunities that exist along the value chain are site specific, and often also time specific. In such a complex context, the selection of best-bet technologies, and complementary institutional and organization options have to be carefully selected, and will often need adaptation to suit local circumstances.

In this context, the project will work in sites representing three types of value chains:

- Peri-urban production for Urban consumption;
- Rural production for Urban consumption; and
- Rural production for Rural consumption.

Partners

IFAD-EU, CIAT, MAAIF, NaLIRRI, NAADS, Makerere University, Local Governments of Kamuli, Masaka and Mukono districts, Swedish Agricultural University (SLU), Volunteer Efforts for Development Concerns (VEDCO), Vétérinaires Sans Frontières –Belgium (VSF), Ugandan Piggery Organization (UPO), Farmgain Africa, Wambizzi Cooperative, Pig Production and Marketing Uganda Ltd.

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